

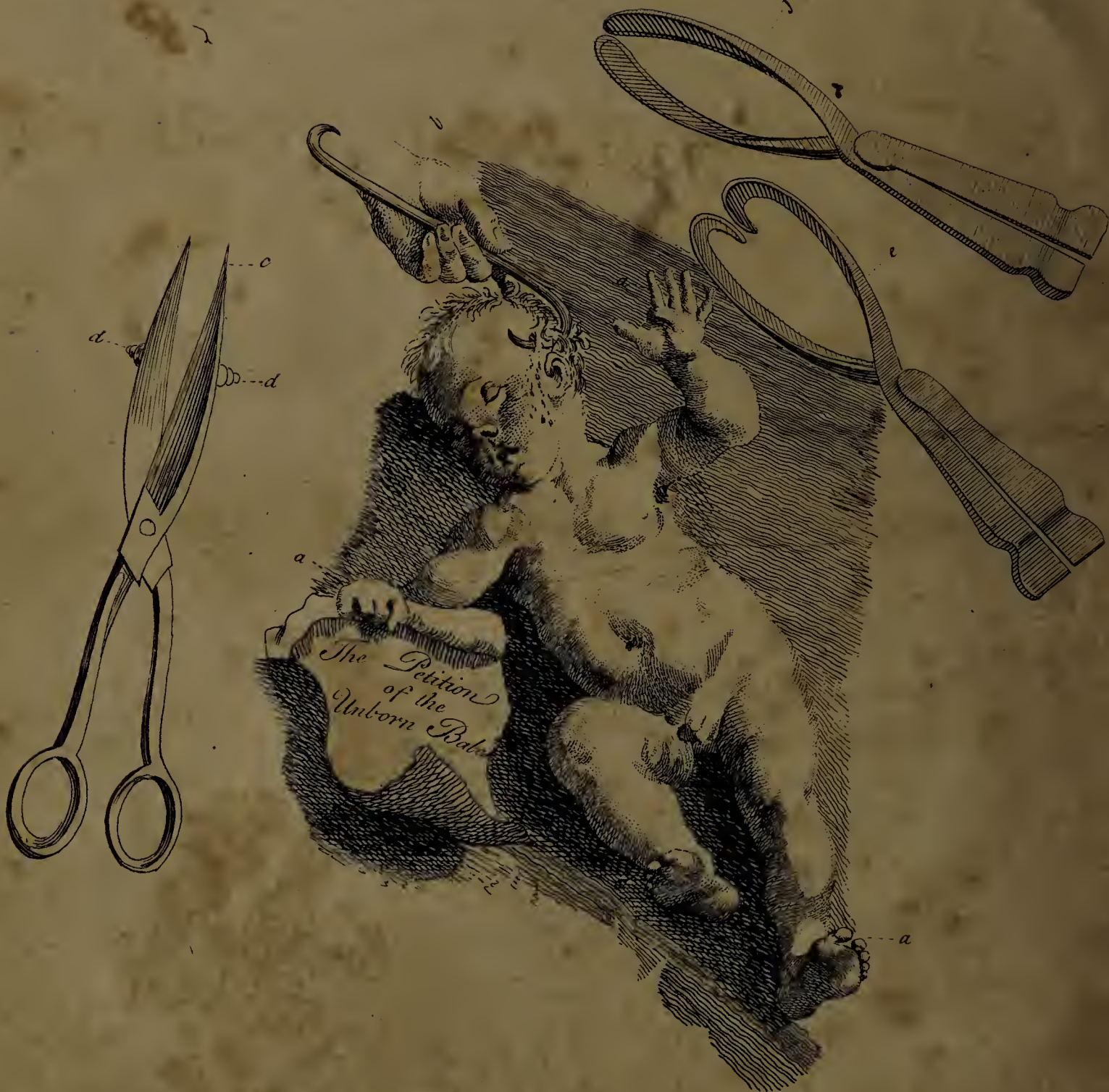
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THICKNESS, P

for Moral

Longtown

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MAN-MIDWIFERY
ANALYSED:
AND THE
Tendency of that Practice
DETECTED AND EXPOSED.
WITH A
COPPER-PLATE

REPRESENTING

An Exact Drawing, taken from the *Death*, of a MONSTER
that was born in the Year 1745 ; with a Description
at large of the said *Lusus Naturæ*.

THE SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. DAVIS, in *Piccadilly*, and T. CASLON,
opposite Stationers-Hall, 1765.

NEW YORK

1880

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A D D R E S S E D T O

All Men in general, and to all Married Men
in particular.

I Lately published, at the request of some prudent, sensible married women, a Letter, addressed to a young lady on her marriage, relative to the indecent and destructive practices of Men Midwives ; and I have the satisfaction to hear the design of that Letter is generally approved of, by men of sense, and women of modesty.

The matter is of the utmost importance ; and I flatter myself there are few women into whose hands the letter may fall ; who will not seriously weigh the arguments therein advanced, on a subject so interesting, and so essential to their happiness.

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But finding myself under many restraints in point of decency, in an address to a young lady; and well knowing how necessary it is, that all men, as well as women, should unite in discountenancing this indecent and unnecessary practice: I now address myself to all men in general, and to all married men in particular. It is not that I want to indulge my fancy in impure thoughts or expressions, though I must in this epistle make use of both; but let it be remembered, that my motive is thereby to put a stop to impure acts, immodest actions, and the indelicate, unchaste, and unnecessary transactions of Men Midwives; such as they avowedly and publicly profess, and such that every man of sense, decency, sentiment and spirit, must and will disapprove, or be totally indifferent as to his wife's conduct, or his own honour.

The following story is a matter of fact, which happened lately in the West of England. A gentleman of the faculty, (i. e. *a country surgeon, apothecary and man-midwife*) being sent for in great haste to deliver a woman, did, as soon as he arrived, in order I suppose to shew his dexterity, by the means of a hook, deliver
her

her instantly from her pain, and the child from a life it could scarcely be said to have entered into : And having so done, took his fee and his leave ; but before he had got two miles off, he was pursued and overtaken by the husband, who desired his immediate return, as the pains of his wife were come on again in a more violent manner than ever ; but before the husband and doctor got back, she was delivered of another child, by the help *only* of that excellent, and scarce ever failing female midwife, Goody Nature ! This old Lady, who had practised the art of midwifery in every corner of the globe, for many generations, with amazing success ; was, about fifty years ago, stifled in France between two featherbeds, by Messrs. Doctor *La Motte* and *Mauriceau* : and no sooner was the good old lady interred, than these, and many other male impostors in that fantastical country, endeavoured to intrude themselves on the public as her legitimate sons ; nay, to be able by their art, and with the help of hooks, crotchets, fillets, forceps, and scissars, to surpass the good old lady.

The vivacity, and the love of novelty, peculiar to that nation ; and the great liberties the two sexes are allowed to take with each other in that kingdom, promoted the

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designs

designs of these men ; and prevented a detection of such impostors, till they became so numerous, and had established so much interest, (owing I presume to their sex) that the old lady, their pretended mother, has there, long since been forgot. That such a practice as this should begin in France, be encouraged by the ladies, and permitted by the men, does not much surprize me ; because modesty in that country, is rather an unfashionable part of high breeding, and high life ; but that Englishmen, tenacious of their own, and their wives honour, should tamely submit to a practice so unnecessary, and so big with mischief, amazes me beyond conception : and I can account for it only, because a few women of fashion, as they are called, have countenanced it, and their pusillanimous husbands have been afraid to forbid it. The middling class of people must be in fashion, and ape the quality ; decency be kicked down stairs, and modesty put out of countenance, because my Lady Mary Modish hates an old fumbling woman about her person.

The Critical, or Monthly Reviewers, I forget which, were pleased to observe, that the author of the Address to a young Lady on her Marriage, was (though a pre-
tender

tender to decency) the most indecent creature himself that ever took a pen in hand. Whether this resentment arose from the *sting* in the *tail* of the letter levell'd at these *Book Midwives*, or from their being chiefly composed of surgeons and men midwives, who murder books for want of *infant practice*, I must submit to the reader's judgment: but they ought to have owned that every indelicate expression in that epistle, is extracted almost *verbatim* from their Friend Dr. Smellie's Treatise on Midwifery, a book written in English, the matter by Smellie, and the language said to be that of Dr. Smollet.

That men midwives may think foolishly, and act wantonly, is no more than I can easily conceive; but that a man midwife should write, and publish a serious book; and give therein serious directions relative to the practice of midwifery, so contrary to reason, so void of judgment, and so alarming to modesty*; is astonishing beyond expression! But to avoid the monthly critic's lash, I will give a few extracts from one of these learned

* The signs of pregnancy (says Smellie, page 185) are to be distinguished from those belonging to *Obstructions*, by the *Touch* in the *Vagina*! and sometimes by the *Touch* in the *Rectum*!

gentlemen's performances, that the decency of this Author, and the letter writer, may be compared by the judicious reader, as well as the Reviewers. Dr. Smellie in his Treatise on Midwifery, page 92, speaking of the parts of generation in women, observes, "*That the Clitoris, with its Preputium, is found between the Labia on the middle and fore part of the Pubis; and from the lower part of the Clitoris, the Nymphæ rising, spread outwards, and downwards, to the Os Externum, forming a kind of sulcus or furrow, called the Fossa Magna, or Navicularis, for the direction of the Penis in coition, or of the Finger in touching, into the Vagina!*" By this shrewd observation on the wisdom of Providence, the modest Doctor, in his first chapter, shews plainly that touching is an essential part of the practice of midwifery; and that, in his opinion, those parts of a woman were formed by nature, not only for the direction of the Penis in coition, but for the *direction* of the Doctor's finger in touching: The manner of doing which, the Doctor explains thus, page 180.

" Touching, says the ingenious Doctor, is performed
 " by introducing the fore finger, lubricated with pomatum, into the Vagina, in order to feel the Os Inter-
 " num,

“ num, and Neck of the Uterus ; and sometimes into
 “ the Rectum *, to discover the stretching of the Fundus :
 “ By some we are advised to touch with the middle finger,
 “ as being the longest ; and by others to employ both that
 “ and the first ; but the middle is too much encumbered
 “ by that on each side, to answer the purpose fully ; and
 “ when two are introduced together, the patient never
 “ fails to complain. The design of touching is to be in-
 “ formed whether the woman is, or is not with child ; to
 “ know how far she is advanced in her pregnancy ; if she
 “ is in danger of a miscarriage ; if the Os Uteri be dilated ;
 “ and in time of labour to form a right judgment of the
 “ case, from the opening of the Os Internum, and the
 “ pressing down of the membranes with their waters ; and
 “ lastly, to distinguish what part of the child is presented.
 “ It is generally impracticable to discover by a Touch
 “ in the Vagina, whether or not the Uterus is impreg-
 “ nated, till after the fourth month : then the best time
 “ is in the morning, when the woman is fasting, after

* Page 183.—The stretching of the *fundus* is sometimes felt by the
 finger introduced into the Rectum ! before it can be perceived in the Va-
 gina !

SMELLIE.

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“ the contents of the bladder and Rectum have been dis-
 “ charged, and she ought if necessary, to submit to the
 “ enquiry in a standing posture; because in that case, the
 “ the Uterus hangs lower down in the Vagina, and the
 “ weight is more sensible to the Touch than when she lies
 “ reclined.”

Thus much the ingenious Doctor: But as women's passions are very unlike those of men, and generally lie dormant, till stirr'd by the dalliance of a man; may I not be permitted to observe that the design of touching also, *may be*, to see if any emotions arise in the *touched* lady's breast, that the Doctor may take advantage of? A man permitted to take such a liberty, cannot answer for his own conduct; and the simple woman who submits to it, knows not the consequences that may arise from such transactions, nor is she worthy ever afterwards of her husband's affection, for so grossly violating the laws of decency. I will suppose myself, for instance, a man-midwife, sent for by a lady of youth and beauty; the lady has not been long married; she is unwell; doubtful whether she is with child, and desirous of being informed; but quite a stranger to the manner by which the Doctor is to *arrive* at his knowledge.

Upon

Upon my arrival, if her husband happens to be present, he must retire ; for I know too well, the pain that he must feel, on hearing even the *first necessary question* : Therefore nothing but an affected, stiff air, a grave face peeping out of a *profound* wig, and my hand kept *warm* in my muff, must transpire, till the *husband* is gone out of the room ; and from that instant, the dressing-room becomes sacred to me and my patient. I then proceed to ask such questions, with an air of gravity and importance, that must confound a woman of modesty beyond imagination : upon perceiving her embarrassment, I get up, take her by the hand, and tell her how very unlike her conduct is to my lady Lucy Likeit, whom I have just left ; that her ladyship thought she was with child, but that I *could perceive* no circle round *her nipples**, nor by the *touch* had I any reason to believe she was breeding : This reconciles my new patient ; she hears, and wonders at lady Lucy's conduct ; but believing it no more than is common, and that the Doctor has a licence to take, and

* Page 187.—Smellie observes, that *Obstructions* and *Pregnancy* are both accompanied by a stretching fullness of the breasts, but on the *last* only may be perceived the *Areola*, or brown ring round the nipples ; but this circle is not always so discoverable as in the *first* pregnancy.

she to grant these liberties, she acquiesces. I then proceed to examine *her breasts*, nipples, &c. by which I am soon able to discover, what further liberties I may proceed to, under the sanction of my great wig, and my grave face; and if once admitted to *the touch*, all difficulties for five or six months after, are removed; my patient and I understand one another; secrecy is the word; my character, and her honour seal it.

If men-midwives under these circumstances stand unmoved, they are a part of the human species I am a stranger to! Suppose then, for it is no more than natural to suppose it, that I should, after the *Touch**, offer some further liberty, (a more indelicate liberty I cannot offer) suppose then, I say, my patient should fly out, and ask me what I mean by such insolent and unwarrantable conduct? and go towards the Bell, in order to call her husband and servants: what must be done? why, step in between her and the bell, drop on my knees, and implore her pardon; telling her that my profession does

* Page 188.—In the fifth or sixth month of *Uterine* gestation, by the *Touch* into the *Vagina*, we perceive the neck of the womb considerably shortened!

not emasculate me ; that my own, and my family's bread, depends upon my character in my profession ; that I never was so unfortunately overcome upon any *former* occasion ; that what had happened, was more my misfortune than my fault ; and that I must have been more or less than man ; to have stood unmoved, on *such* an occasion, with *such* a woman. Here is a full and certain pardon obtained ; for a sensible woman would be too wise to tell her husband, and a foolish woman too vain.

However high the above scenery may be coloured, it is no more than nature exhibits every day, not only in the capital of this kingdom, but almost in every country town. Whichever way I go out of London, far or near, every town is ornamented with a red door, and a bright knocker, and over it you are informed, in gold letters, that the house is the property of J. BLOWBLADDER, SURGEON, APOTHECARY AND MAN-MIDWIFE. Nay, often two names, as partners in this *mysterious business*, ornament the board.

I know not which to despise most, the husbands who give up their wives to be so wantonly and so unneceffa-

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rily handled and *touched* by men midwives; or the Wives, who are so void of a proper sense of their husband's dignity, and their own modesty, as to employ men midwives upon every occasion: I say upon every occasion; for when once the male Midwife has got *admission*, he becomes Physician general to the whole family; nay, if the husband be ill, the wife will not be easy, unless her Doctor be called in; to the great prejudice of physicians regularly bred; to the abuse of Medicine; and often to the discredit of the greatest blessing to mankind, when trusted in skillful hands.

The dangerous consequences of iron instruments, almost constantly used by men midwives; and which often destroy the life of the child, or mother, or both, and the certainty of rendering the woman's person less *agreeable*, and often loathsome to her husband; ought to have great weight with women, and their husbands also, provided the matter of delicacy, decency, and modesty, was out of the question: and yet it is no uncommon thing to hear a male midwife practitioner, call the greatest calamity and misfortune that can befall a woman, by the ludicrous epithet of *Laying Pit and Boxes together**.

* Read Smellie, and you'll find this no uncommon misfortune, where men practitioners are employed.

Men were born, and women were delivered by the proper attendance of women only, for many generations, and without any bad consequences, either to the mother or the child. Nature left to herself scarce ever errs ; if she does, it generally happens that she over-does, but seldom under-does her part. To wait the course of nature ; receive her hints ; and gently assist her efforts ; is the part of a skillful midwife : he or she who does more, is ignorant of the little they have to do ; and this business ought always to be done, by the assistance of women only ; and a thousand arguments might be produced to confirm it.

I am not unaware that it will be here said, that difficult labours require not only the skill, but strength of a man, and that it would be impossible to deliver some women without instruments ; it may be so ; but I will take upon me to say, it only happens to such women who have been injured by hasty or forced labours, with a former child, or by iron instruments ; it never happens to a woman with her first child ; nor does it ever happen to the poor with any child : the reason is, that they are not injured by the former labours ; and that the old lady

lady mentioned above, is their faithful and unerring midwife.

I see continual accounts of the death of women in childbed that are women of fashion : I seldom hear in the country where I live, of the death of any of my unfashionable neighbours by this *distemper*, as Smellie calls it. When does a mare, a cow, a hare, a rabbit, or any part of the brute creation die, in bringing forth their young ? Scarce ever ! And has Providence been so careful in the preservation of brutes, and left the noblest part of her production in danger ? Certainly Not : Why then should women think it necessary to expose their persons, and their infirmities, and to be twisted and turned about, in whatever posture or attitude the man-midwife is pleased to direct *, either in bed or up, and to keep her husband all this time, in more pain of mind, than that which she suffers in body ; for no other end, but the vanity of having a doctor, as they call it ; but what I call, an outrage to sense, dignity, love and virtue.

* Page 183, Smellie says, " About the fifth or sixth month, the upper part of the *Uterus* is so much stretched, as to rise three or four inches above the *Os Pubis*, so that, by pressing the hand on the belly, especially of *lean women*, it is frequently perceived ! and if, at the same time, the *Index* of the *other hand* be introduced in the *Vagina*, the neck will seem shortened.

That

That some of these *Touching Gentry* have been prosecuted, and severely punished for their lustful attempts, in *touching* their patients, is a notorious truth; that hundreds of them get off, and that many succeed, cannot be doubted: nay, it can scarce be doubted, but they all are liable to fall into the situation I just now supposed myself in, and pointed the way to get out.

I could mention several prosecutions of men midwives upon record*, but the following will be sufficient; though a man who is robbed of his wife's fidelity, does not miss it, till it is too late to advertise the thief.

A merchant of this kingdom, who had a very young and beautiful wife, was attended by an eminent man-midwife, to cure him of a disorder he had got, by going astray, and amusing himself one evening, in the environs of Covent-Garden, while his wife imagined he was gone to his country house at Epsom: The merchant

* The Records of every Court in this Kingdom will confirm this Assertion.

therefore, desired the doctor to visit his wife, whom he suspected to be with child ; and, to save appearances, persuade her, that, by a complaint he found (*from touching I presume*) she laboured under, it was absolutely necessary to lie apart from her husband. The doctor undertook the commission : when, instead of saving the husband's credit, and faithfully keeping his secret, he informed the wife of the whole truth of the affair ; and made such inflammatory observations on the inconstancy of her husband, and the beauty of the wife, that with the advantage of opportunity, her husband's falseness, and large doses of *cantbarides*, which he administered, he debauched her : But these stimulating medicines had such an effect, that she died in consequence thereof ; and, by way of attonement to her injured husband, declared the whole truth in her last hours.

Doctor Smellie, in the introduction to his treatise on midwifery, says,---“ *It is natural to suppose, that, while the simplicity of the early ages remained, women would have recourse to none but persons of their own sex in diseases peculiar to it ! Accordingly, says he, we find that in Egypt midwifry was practised by women.*”---
 What a pity it was, that the use of hooks and crotchets,
 pincers,

pincers, boring scissars, tapes and filleting, was not known to the poor Egyptians ! That Egyptians, who knew how to preserve dead bodies for three thousand years, so as to keep their living form, should have been so short of invention, as never to have found out the method of scooping a child's brains out, and thereby have preserved the lives of the poor Egyptian ladies ! I suppose all the Egyptian mummies brought over here, besides those which are in the Museum, to be the bodies of poor Egyptian ladies, who died in child-bed ; and that the *hieroglyphics* on their *sicamore* coffins, could they be decyphered, would appear to be, the lamentations of their surviving husbands, that no art could be discovered whereby nature might be *corrected*, and made more perfect.

Little did the poor Egyptian ladies think, that it would be three thousand years, before doctor Smellie would be born, and the art of *touching*, and saving women's lives in this *dangerous distemper**, be brought to perfection.

But, to comfort my fair countrywomen, let it be remembered, that these were Jew ladies. Indeed the doctor observes, that a law was made at Athens, prohibiting
women,

* As Dr. Smellie calls it.

women, and slaves, from practising physic ; but, says he,
 “ *the mistaken modesty of the sex rendered it afterwards*
 “ *absolutely necessary to allow free women the privilege of*
 “ *sharing this art with the men.*”

It is pleasant to observe the artful and fallacious manner in which Smellie *touches* upon the prohibition of women practitioners at Athens. But I must set before my fair countrywomen, the noble example of the Athenian Matrons upon this occasion.

The law laid them under a necessity of employing men, or trusting wholly to the efforts of nature ; many did so, rather than submit to a practice so repugnant to decency : upon some particular occasions, *this mistaken modesty of the sex* proved fatal ; which being observed by a woman named *Agnodice*, she dressed herself in man's apparel, and entered herself a student under a certain professor named *Hierophilus* ; and after having obtained a competent knowledge in that art, she revealed herself to her own sex : who agreed, with ONE consent, to employ *none* beside her.

Hereupon

Hereupon the men practitioners, enraged at their want of business, indicted her before the court of *Areopagus*, as one that CORRUPTED mens wives. To obviate this accusation, she discovered her sex : upon this, they prosecuted her with *greater eagerness* ; as violating the laws and encroaching upon the *mens prerogative* ; when, to prevent her ruin, the principal Matrons of the city came into court, and, addressing themselves to the Judges, told them,----“ THAT THEY WERE NOT HUSBANDS, “ BUT ENEMIES, WHO WERE GOING TO CONDEMN “ THE PERSON TO WHOM THEY OWED THEIR LIVES.” ----And it was upon this modest, and spirited remonstrance of the Athenian ladies, that *Agnodice* was acquitted ; and that law repealed.

And shall the ladies of this happy Isle, and in this enlightened and refined age, be less delicate than the Athenians ? forbid it Decency : forbid it Love.

Nash, to prevent the fatal consequences of sudden quarrels at Bath ; a place where gaming more particularly is allowed, if not encouraged ; *enacted a law*, That no man should wear a sword at Bath, but he who was not intitled to wear one any where else : and that law is strictly observed there to this day. And if a law was enacted,

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allowing

allowing those women only, the assistance of men-midwives, who acknowledge themselves unworthy of, or indifferent about the affection of their husbands ; I think it would prevent the custom of many thousand *iron instruments being worn and used*, that are much more fatal to the human species.

Indeed we have many women amongst us, that would not suffer a man midwife to attend them, under any circumstances whatever ; nay I could, without quitting this island, produce a King, a Queen, and eight or ten Princes of the Blood, who all came into the world (God be thanked) just as the poor Egyptians did *, but, I suppose it arose from a *mistaken* modesty of the sex ; or Dr. Blowbladder, or some of his brethren, had certainly been called in.

Much more might be said, to convince every man of sense, and every woman of modesty, how very indecent,

* How often do we see accounts of *unfortunate* young women, being delivered quite *alone* ; whose shame and modesty tempt them to commit a crime against nature afterwards ! But I never heard of any of these unfortunate persons being found dead for want of a midwife ! Goody Nature always steps in upon these occasions, and does *more* than her patient would wish.

and

and how very indelicate, the necessary business of a man midwife must be carried on. But if he be wantonly disposed, he may turn your wife in whatever attitude for sight, or *touch*, he pleases; nay, “*he may so place her, with her breech towards him, on the side of her bed, with a sheet thrown over him and her,*” (as Smellie directs) so as to gratify, unknown to the woman, any passion he pleases. I know it may be objected to, and said, that a woman, under such circumstances, must be disgustful, and remove every sensual appetite: But this I deny; it is said a woman is like a riddle, nothing in it, when *found out*; but a fine woman, *unfound out*, can appear in no situation, not even in the act of death, but such as has stirred the most unconquerable of passions.

It is not the science I mean to decry, but the practice of the men, who teach, and profess it. I would have women properly instructed, and women only employed: I would have instruments quite disused; being convinced they destroy more than they preserve.----To employ men on such occasions is abominable: and I own I never meet any of these obstetrical physicians, that I do not look on them, as I should on the Emperor of Morocco, or the Bashaw of Tangier, going to his seraglio, I really consider, that, every man, from the first
peer

peer in the kingdom, down to my butter-man's wife in Clare-market, (for she has *her doctor*) who opens his doors to men midwives, opens a way to disgrace their families; to injure the persons, if not the morals of their wives; nor can it fail to induce every man, who seriously and prudently considers this practice, to look on the husband who consents to it, with contempt and indignation. As to myself, I ingenuously own, my wife's mind being out of the question, I would sooner give her up to the embraces of any one man, once a year, than subject her person to be so exposed, *touched*, and handled, as she who is attended, and delivered of a child may, nay must be, by a male midwife.

If the Reader is desirous of any further proofs of what I advance, let him read Doctor Smellie's book; and take the Doctor's word, instead of mine.

There is not any thing necessary in midwifery, but what a woman can learn, and execute, with more propriety, and with as much safety as men. Instruments are always injurious, often dangerous, and scarce ever necessary. The world was peopled much better, before the mungrel name of man midwives was known; they were imported here from France, at the same time that

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Tire-women were put down in England. The alteration of modes, within these thirty years, are very extraordinary ; men midwives are become general ; men hair-dressers, men stay-makers ; in short, we want nothing now but the Italian *Cicisbeo* * to be introduced here, in order to qualify our high bred fashionable ladies, to be justly ranked with the ladies of Genoa, a country without wood, water without fish, their men without honour, and their women without Virtue. And, if this should ever become the character of the finest, and, till of late, the most esteemed women in the world, for their modesty, beauty, and fidelity ; strange as it may appear, I will pronounce, their degeneracy began with the practice of men in midwifery, and must end with their disuse, or have a worse end.

I have the satisfaction to know a great number of married women, who have always thought on this

* The Italian *Cicisbeo* is the constant attendant and gallant to married women. In Italy, every one having a *Cicisbeo*, who attends her whenever he pleases, in private or in public ; he even assists in dressing her ; and the *Italian husbands* will tell you, no *Cicisbeo* was ever guilty of an *impure touch* ; and so will every man midwife tell you in England ; but—*Questa cosa non m' entra.*

subject, as I write ; it is my wife's lot to be acquainted with none other : I would as soon send my wife to visit a Covent-Garden hostess, as be familiar with these male midwife Trumpeters.-----Lard, Madam, who is your doctor ? says one ; well, I'll never *have a woman* ; my doctor is the sweetest man ! so *gentle*, so *humane*, so *patient* ! and then he is so *safe* * : with a thousand such fine things of the Doctor, that the Trumpeter soon makes half the circle in love with her dear doctor, before they have even seen him, and determine to consult him the next morning. I seriously believe that most women really love their midwife, in some degree, equal to that which they feel towards their husbands ; for, if the husband be an instrument to their pleasures, and comforts, the doctor also is, in their simple opinion, the instrument of their ease, and their deliverer from extreme misery. I never heard a woman speak of her midwife but with an uncommon degree of kindness ; I have often heard a woman speak of an affectionate husband, without betraying any.

* I should be glad to know how these advocates for *male practice* became so well informed as to matters of *safety* : all *the rest*, I will allow them to be competent judges of.

That

That many innocent and chaste women have, and do employ men midwives, I make no doubt ; and that many men midwives may, and do acquit themselves, as decently as their practice will admit of, I will not deny : But, that it is an immodest, an unnecessary, and a shameful practice to encourage, I will maintain ; and that there lives not a man of sense and sentiment, who loves his wife, that ever returned to her bed with that degree of satisfaction and affection, who has undergone a male midwife's *Touch*, as she whose person is, or he supposes to be, sacred to him, and him alone. Whenever I see a married woman nice in sentiment, and delicate in her expressions, and find she is attended by a male midwife ; I consider her a pretender to both : I look on her with contempt ; and I consider that, if she had the authority of custom to support it, she would permit me, or any other man, to take the same liberty.

Hard as this, and my former treatise, may seem to fall on the ladies, those who are warned by it, and apprized of the consequences, will find the Author their friend, and their deliverer ; a friend of more importance to their happiness than the unthinking multitude are aware of ; and a deliverer from worse evils than the pains of child-birth can produce.

Men

I desire every man who loves his wife, or regards his own honour, seriously to figure to himself a smart man-midwife, locked into his wife's apartment, lubricating his finger with pomatum, in order to introduce it into his wife's *Vagina*! nay, if he pleases, two fingers, or one finger in the *Vagina*, and the other into the *Rectum*, according to the ingenious Dr. Smellies direction under the chapter *Touching* *. 'Tis true, the doctor says, the patient never fails to complain when *two* are introduced; but what need the doctor care for that? He knows she will not *complain* of it to her husband; and her complaining to the humane, gentle doctor, furnishes him with an opportunity to express his concern; to shew a fresh instance of his *tendernefs*; and to profess his admiration of a woman so *exquisitely susceptible*!

And I desire every woman who loves her husband, or who covets his love; seriously to consider, whether she

* Can any man of sense or delicacy, or any woman of virtue and modesty, read or consider the above directions (which are repeatedly given by Smellie) without feeling the utmost indignation to a practice so shameful: And if Smellie, who is considered the oracle for knowledge in Midwifery, directs it; who can doubt but that his pupils practice it! And if they do, I submit it to the judgment of every man, who knows human nature, and to every woman, who wishes to act conformable to the rules of decency; Whether that practice alone does not justify this publication?

be strictly intitled to the appellation, of being called a modest woman, after she has admitted a male operator thus to insult her person, and her understanding, by taking a liberty that can give him no information whatever, but that she is a fool, or worse, who suffers it. Nay, I am thoroughly persuaded, that every man midwife, who happens to be possessed, of either sense, or sentiment, must, in his own breast, entertain but a very indifferent opinion, of the understanding of his patients *spouses*.

That many women refuse their operator this liberty of *Touching*, I firmly believe; but the very attempt of the man, and the necessary consequence of the woman's refusal, is almost as bad; and either one or the other is sure to happen, where the subject is, in *the Doctor's* opinion, worthy of *his inspection*.

But setting aside every consideration, as to modesty, delicacy, sense, sentiment, and, above all, how this kind of proceeding may fit on the mind of an affectionate husband, I will maintain it, that every woman runs a greater risque of losing her life, with a skilful man-midwife, than with even an ignorant fumbling old woman.

The man-midwife is for dispatch, and that dispatch cannot be obtained without a double force on nature ; for it must be obtained with instruments, and consequently, must bring into the world a child that ought not to have made its appearance for some hours *. I suspect it will be said, what signifies an hour or two ? But by the same reason it may be asked, what signifies a month, or a week ? and yet either of these mistakes often prove fatal to the mother or child, or both. But suppose there were no other consideration, but the preservation of the woman's person ; a circumstance of no small importance with the fair sex ; yet that is inevitably spoiled, so sure as a man midwife, and consequently an instrument, comes near them ; for they as certainly use them, as they prudently and *cautiously* conceal them, according to Doctor Smellie's particular advice.

When the parts have been once extended, for the

* A man midwife in the West of England, being engaged in a shooting party abroad, which broke in upon his promise to a poor woman he was to attend ; he went to see her, in hopes (as she was near her time) of finding her in labour : but she was quite well, and at her washing tub. He however prevailed upon her to be delivered then ! which she, after much persuasion, submitted to ; and was accordingly delivered, together with her child, from the cares of this troublesome world !

convenience

convenience of the Doctor's hand, and forceps, they never recover their former elasticity ; and if the woman escapes inward injuries, that often terminate in ulcers many years after, she cannot escape, without rendering her person less agreeable, if not totally disagreeable to her husband : For these people not only do injury at the time of delivery, but frequently, three or four days after, introduce their hand and arm to perform the office known amongst themselves by the epithet of *sweeping the womb* * ; than which, nothing can be a stronger proof, of the injury done the woman's person at her labour : for this act of womb-sweeping, cannot possibly be performed on the person of a woman who is delivered as she ought, by that unerring *Old Lady*, mentioned with so much honour, in the first sheet of this letter ; and to this old lady, I hope to be the means of making known, all the young and amiable part of my fair countrywomen, who may be assured, that it is less indecent to read this letter to every man of their acquaintance in public, than to admit a male midwife in private ; and those who are

* Smellie says, page 237, when the *placenta* adheres to the *fundus*, and all the lower part of the womb is strongly contracted, the hand must be forced up in form of a cone into the *Vagina*!

wife enough to rely on what is here wrote, without any other view than their happiness, will find, by experience, that the Author is as much their friend, as he seems to be an enemy to the male midwives ; which, in truth, is not the case ; for, as I said above, it is the *practice*, not the *men*, that I mean to exhibit in a proper, and consequently an odious light.

I cannot conclude, without drawing forth the sting from the tail of my former *Letter, addressed to a young Lady on her Marriage*, and levelled at the Monthly and Critical Reviews ; for though the Critical Review mentioned that letter in the most contemptuous manner, the Monthly Review has had the candour to mention it in a manner that did honour to both : and have made their remarks with that cool and dispassionate judgment, that is incumbent on Reviewers. It is not whether *they themselves* approve, or disapprove the subject ; but to inform their readers, fairly and impartially, with the subject and substance of the performance ; yet these *critical* monthly Book-Midwives (for they murder books for want of infant practice) cannot confine their pens within the bounds of decency, because a letter is published, decrying a profession they were bred to, but by which they cannot earn their bread ; and therefore were obliged
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to lay aside the forceps for the pen, and endeavour to *scoop out the brains of grown gentlemen and ladies* who figure in print, instead of *reducing* childrens heads in their mother's womb. However, to convince you, Messrs. Critical Reviewers, that I am not very angry with you, I will give you one word of friendly advice: If you are really wise, and wish well to your brethren of the faculty, *forget* this *indecent* letter in your monthly catalogue; for in spite of all you can say, as to the indecency of the writer, or the incorrect manner in which he writes, it will have its weight among men of sense, and women of virtue: And I flatter myself that it will open the eyes of a multitude of men, and women too, who never considered this matter as they ought; and determine them to be satisfied that Mrs. Draper, Mrs. Maddox, and many other women, can do all that is necessary to be done, with decency and safety; and as the two first Personages in the kingdom have (when a crown was at stake) been content with the assistance *only* of *Goody Nature*, *Goody Kennon*, and *Goody Draper*. I hope to see the day, when the ladies of this kingdom, will follow the noble example of the *Athenian matrons*; and that amidst the great number of publick charities, that so particularly characterize this age, and kingdom, for their humanity, that some lady of high rank will endeavour to render it more remarkable for its decency, by promoting a subscription sufficient to

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establish a fund for the instruction of women, in the practice of midwifery : A woman of fortune cannot do more honour to herself ; nor a greater service to her Sex. We have already experienced, that the H I G H E S T example is *not sufficient* to remove the prejudices of the generality of our high bred ladies, in favour of the men midwives : and therefore the exposing their weaknesses in this publick manner, with a view to their happiness, ought to be as well received, as it is kindly meant.---- They ought seriously to consider what is here laid before them, in a light in which they had never seen it before, tho' a just one : And I will appeal to any woman of sense, who lives in London, and who is within the reach of Mrs. Draper, Mrs. Maddox, and many other women midwives, of known abilities, and yet employs a man, I say I will appeal to any woman of sense, under these circumstances, whether she has not, by so doing, sacrificed her modesty, to fashion ; her person, to the highest indignity ; and her husband's honour, to the sneers and secret contempt of her male operator. If she will not allow this, I will tell her a truth she will find by woeful experience ; which is, if her husband be a man of sense and sentiment, that she has had a fall, almost equal to that of her first parents ; and if she ever after complain of the coolness and indifference of her husband towards her, I could tell her another truth, not less alarming.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Kennon*, a woman not less esteemed for her goodness of heart, than for her skill in the practice of midwifery, and who always attended Her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of Wales, put a five hundred pound bank note into the hands of the author of the *Petition of the Unborn Babies*, when she lay upon her death-bed: so much did she approve of that performance; at a *time too*, that she could have no interested view.----This Petition in behalf of little innocents, whose sufferings by torture and even death in their mother's womb, are nevertheless shocking, though they are unable to move compassion by their tears, or groans; this petition, I say, was wrote by one of the most able physicians of the present, or perhaps of any age: I forbear to mention his name, because I have not his permission; but I have the very best authority for what I say; and his authority, and great abilities, justify the assertions throughout this pamphlet; for he, who it must be allowed is a competent judge, objected to, and does object to the practice of men in midwifery, as unsafe, indecent, and unnecessary: often dangerous to the mother, or child, or both; and always a reproach to those women who encourage it, unless in the utmost extremities.

This pamphlet, which had been printed many months, was laid by at a bookseller's shop; the Author being undetermined when, or if ever it should be published: for,
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tho' it contains many bold assertions, it contains no willful mistake; nor is any thing advanced in it, but what is well founded: But nevertheless I considered, it might prove injurious to a great number of gentlemen bred up to the practice of midwifery; and to some very deserving, modest men, who have families to maintain, and whose chief support might depend upon this *particular* branch of their business. Indeed a man midwife, who accidentally came into this bookseller's shop, telling me, in general conversation, that he had a large family to maintain, not only *then* disposed me to withhold this publication, but induced me rather to have wished, the former letter had not been made so publick; so much was my personal weakness at variance with the public good: for I solemnly protest, I have no other end in view, nor any particular friend to serve.

I write from self conviction; the approbation of many women of discretion; and of many men of judgment: I reverence truth; and am open to conviction. I have advanced no intentional falsity, nor have I given any extracts that are not faithfully copied from the oracle of midwifery, Dr. Smellie: and if any gentleman practitioner can shew what I have here advanced, is contrary to the good of society in general; and so represent the necessity of male practitioners, that men *in general* approve of it; I will *reduce the head, and squeeze out the*

the brains of this performance instantly : But then it must be done by a man who lives like *a christian* ; who *be-
haves* like *a gentleman* ; and who writes like *a scholar* : not by any debauched, abandoned fellow, *whose indecent
practice with every woman he comes near, either maids,
wives or widows, nay even with little children, are noto-
rious through a whole county.* But, on the other hand, if these arguments cannot be overturned, I am ready to subscribe a much larger sum towards the instruction of female midwives, than is perhaps quite consistent with the small limits of my own fortune.

It may now be asked, why my personal weakness did not prevail ? to which I reply ; my bookseller had informed me, that the gentleman mentioned above, is a man of a good private fortune ; and at the same time, he put into my hands two or three very insolent anonymous letters, directed to him, but pointed at the author of a Letter to a Young Lady. These unmerited, and unprovoked, scurrilous letters, had on them the *Ipswich post mark*, and I am since informed they were wrote by a male *Goody* of that town, who about the same time printed a little book on the same subject, as contemptible as the author, and too illiterate, to merit any serious reply. His brethren, however, are obliged to this pert, forward coxcomb, for the first publication ; and to the uncandid remarks of the Monthly Reviewer's

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Country Correspondent, Mr. R-----D*, for this second edition.

Now I mention the reviewers, I cannot omit assuring them, that I am never inclined to be angry with men who deal candidly ; nay, I am not even angry at their very partial and disingenuous remarks upon this pamphlet ; because they acknowledge themselves obliged to a *Country Correspondent* for part of those remarks ; and I flatter myself it is for *those parts* wherein they deviate so much from the character of gentlemen, as to give the lie direct. But pray, gentlemen, what must the public think of reviewers, who receive and publish the author's *own* account of his *own* book ? I say, what must the public think of reviewers, if they publish the remarks of a *Country Correspondent*, in favour of his *own* book, and his own *practices* ? Or, do they not know that Mr. R-----D, to whom they are so much obliged, is not only their *Country Correspondent*, but the writer of the remarks ? *yea*, and author also of the letter, so inimitably executed in defence of male practice ? Pray, gentlemen, shew your impartiality, and tell your readers *now*, that you entirely agree with me. The *womb sweeping*, which so raises your indignation, I had many years ago from the mouth of a very eminent man midwife : Dr. Smellie directs it, in some cases, to be done with force ! even though the womb be *strongly contracted* !---Pray, gentlemen,

* See Monthly Review, 1764.

men, who told you the author had conceived an implacable averſion to men midwives? He has told you in both pamphlets quite otherwiſe; and now repeats it, for he has conceived none.----The word *never*, was not intended to be underſtood in its moſt extenſive ſenſe: Does not a phyſician frequently comfort his patients, by telling them, that no one ever died of an intermitting fever, or an ague? and yet certainly it has happened in both caſes, though very rarely: Therefore, when I ſay, a mare, a hare, a cow, or rabbit, never die in parturition; I mean, that it is very unuſual: and I can with truth ſay, that in forty-five years of my own life, a circumſtance of death in that way, never came within my own ſight; nor the report of ſuch an accident within my own houſe.----Surely; gentlemen, the tranſcribing Dr. Smellie's art of *touching*, was a very neceſſary, and will prove a very powerful argument, againſt the practice of man midwifery: It has *touched* the hearts of many modeſt women with remorse; and it has occaſioned many ſenſible men to conſider this matter in a proper light. It is the indecency, as well as the danger, that I mean to lay open: and if this exhibition of facts are ſo alarming to men of *reading* and *letters*, that they do not chuſe to tranſcribe them into *their works*: How much more alarming, muſt the practice itſelf be, to every married man; when he reflects that his wife has

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(as many women who call themselves, nay believe themselves virtuous do) put her person into the hands of a male midwife; who may so alarm her with fears, setting aside the possibility of exciting any *other passion*, that he may take every liberty (one excepted) with her person that he pleases?

Those married men, who can consider what is here said, with indifference; I am willing to except from this general address: and to those married women, who can read the above, as well as the following extracts from Dr. Smellie's treatise, without shame and horror, I am willing to allow the free use of men, not only in midwifery, but upon every other occasion. It is, as I have said above, to those men of sense and sentiment, who love their wives with pure affection; and to those women, that are solicitous to wear down the charms of their youth in possession of the affection of their husbands; that this and my former letter is addressed. I cannot conclude without mentioning a few circumstances that greatly promote the business of the male practitioners, as well as encourage female patients; and that is the innumerable stories, that every female nurse is furnished with, to alarm the ladies they attend. There is not one of these nurses that cannot, nay that do not, in the course of a month's sitting by the side of their mistress's bed, inform her of a thousand instances of the *ignorance*

nerance of *female* midwives, and of the Doctor's skill ! how many women they have attended, who *inevitably* had been lost, with their dear babes, had not Dr. Blow-bladder been called in, at the very instant her good lady was expiring : and thus the poor deluded mistress is frightened out of her reason, her decency, and love, that nurse *Grim-it* may carry off the *donation* of the gossips, without having a female midwife to *divide it* with her : nay, instead of this draw-back, the Doctor, if he be either *eminent* or *wise*, generally desires the nurse's acceptance of a bit of money for her trouble, in dressing the child : By this means he convinces Mrs. Nurse, *almost* to the bottom of her heart, that a female midwife is as dangerous about the person of a lying-in woman, as a rattle-snake about a man's leg : she sounds the Doctor's trumpet far and near ; and all her *kind* mistresses, and *indulgent* masters, are sure to have the warmest recommendation of Doctor Blowbladder's art of *touching*.

It is no unpleasant thing to observe, with what address an ignorant nurse, an ignorant host, or his more ignorant hostler ; or indeed any of the very lowest people, trained up to one particular branch of money getting ; can impose upon, and over-reach their most sensible customers : A nurse will no more own her admiration of the Doctor's skill arises from self interest, than an ostler will tell you, till after he is paid, and *fee'd*, for your horse, that he paid three pence for mending your boot, or removing a shoe, or the like ; because having already secured all your halfpence, he knows he has an equal

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chance to get fix-pence more; and then, like Mrs. nurse, hugs himself over his beer, in having thus imposed upon a gentleman.

I must not pass over another circumstance very injurious to the ladies who are attended by men midwives; for no sooner is she brought to bed; than the practitioner, to shew his doctorial importance, dispatches the two *initials* of his name to Mr. Slipflop; and Mr. Slipflop, adding a *little warmth* to the poor lady's suffocating *hot* bed-chamber, lays her down, for the first ten or twelve days, in a fever; which passes off for the milk fever, when it is attended with no other very bad consequences.

Though the author has experienced, like the Spartan female midwife, many abortive effects of the male midwives, to intimidate him; yet he flatters himself the candid, virtuous, and sensible part of the ladies will perceive that *their* happiness was, and is the main object he had in view: For, “ without the conversation and society of the fair sex, I should esteem the world but a desert, and the most polished part of mankind would appear but as hermits in masquerade, or a kind of civilized satyrs; so imperfect and unaccomplished are we, without the re-union of our lost rib: that substantial and integral part of us. They are the guardians of our infancy, and youth; the companions of our riper years; and the cherishers of our old age. From the cradle to the grave, we are wrapped in a circle of obligation to them, for their love, and good offices; and he is a monster in nature who returns
“ them

“ them not the careffes of an innocent affection, the
 “ spotless fallies of virtue, and gratitude. Love is the
 “ foul of the world, and the vital prop of the elements ;
 “ it is the cement of human fociety ; and ftrongeft fence
 “ of nature : Earth would be a hell without it ; neither
 “ can there be a heaven, where this is abfent :” But
 then let it be remembered, that,

Nothing beftows fo much beauty on a woman as mo-
 defty ; *Venus* herfelf pleafes moft, when fhe is repre-
 fented to be withdrawing herfelf from the eyes of the
 beholders, in a fhy retiring pofture.

Extracts from Dr. Smellie's Treatife on the Theory and Practice of Midwifery.

Page 250 and 251, fpeaking of the ufe of iron for-
 ceps : ‘ *For my own part (fays he) finding in practice,*
 ‘ *that by the directions of Chapman, Giffard and Gre-*
 ‘ *gorie at Paris, I frequently could not move the head*
 ‘ *along without contufing it, and tearing the parts of*
 ‘ *the woman, &c.*

Page 258. ‘ *Even in thefe cafes, indeed, the laft fillet,*
 ‘ *or a long pair of forceps, may take fuch firm hold, that*
 ‘ *with great force and the ftrong purchafe, the head will*
 ‘ *be delivered ; but fuch violence is commonly fatal to the*
 ‘ *woman, by caufing fuch an inflammation, and perhaps*
 ‘ *laceration of the Parts as is attended with mortification.*
 ‘ *In order to difable young Practitioners from running*
 ‘ *fuch risks, and to free myfelf from the temptation of*
 ‘ *ufing too great force, I have always ufed and recom-*
 mended

‘ mended the forceps so short in the handles, that they cannot
 ‘ be used with such violence as to endanger the woman’s
 ‘ life.’

And again, in the same page ; ‘ Great care must be
 ‘ taken in feeling with the fingers all round, that no part
 ‘ of the vagina be included in the lockings :’ meaning
 thereby, that no part of the womb be pinched within
 the forceps, along with the child.

It is indeed shocking to observe how often Smellie directs the *Accoucheur* to take care, when he introduces scissars, and the like kind of instruments into the *vagina*, that he does not cut his own fingers, or the woman’s *vagina* ; but his own fingers are his first care. He also informs us, that women, during their pregnancy, are often afflicted with swellings in the *Labia Pudendi* ; and to remove this, he recommends *puncturing the Parts* ; and this operation is to be repeated, tho’ he allows that these sort of complaints commonly vanish of themselves after delivery : so that a lady who is attended by a skillful midwife, who *understands* his business, is to be touched in the third or fourth month of her pregnancy, and *punctured* frequently during the remaining period. All this may be very proper, for ought I know ; but that it is scandalously indecent, I will maintain.

In boring the child’s Cranium, in order to extract the brain, he says, page 258 : ‘ The Scissars ought to
 ‘ be so sharp at the Points as to penetrate the integu-
 ‘ ments and bones, when pushed with a moderate force ;
 ‘ but not so keen as to cut the Operator’s fingers, or the
 ‘ woman’s vagina !

Page 264 : ' *The woman being laid in a right position for the application of the forceps, the blades ought to be privately convey'd between the featherbed and the cloaths, at a small distance from one another, on each side of the Patient : That this conveyance may be more easily effected, the legs of the instrument ought to be kept in the operator's side-pockets. Thus provided, when he sits down to deliver, let him spread the sheet that hangs over the bed, upon his lap, and under that cover, take out, and dispose the blades on each side of the Patient ; by which means, he will often be able to deliver with the forceps, without their being perceived by the woman herself, or any other of the assistants. Some people pin a sheet to each shoulder, and throw the other end over the bed, that they may be the more effectually concealed from the view of those who are present. But this method is apt to confine and embarrass the Operator. At any rate, as women are commonly frightened at the very name of an instrument, it is advisable to conceal it as much as possible, till the character of the operator is fully established.*

Now I say, that if these two blades, and two legs can be so privately conveyed under the sheet, and so dexterously used by the Doctor, that neither the woman herself, nor any persons that are present, shall know any thing of the matter ; it is more than probable that there may be in this kingdom some thousands of innocent cuckolds, that are *unknown* to be so, even to their wives.

It would be endless to quote the number of alarming circumstances, both to men and women, with which Smellie's *ingenious* book abounds; and which I earnestly recommend to the perusal of those who are desirous of being convinced of the danger, and the indecency of employing male midwives. I shall therefore conclude with observing, that Smellie says, the *Accoucheur* ought to act, and speak, with the utmost delicacy and decorum; and never *violate* the *trust reposed in him*, so as to harbour the least immoral or *indecent design*; but demean himself in all respects, suitable to the *dignity* of his profession! And to say the truth, and to do justice to the memory of Dr. Smellie, I believe he was a skillful man in the practice of midwifery; but I believe also, that either age or long practice, or both together, had divested him of every idea of delicacy, sentiment, and judgment in every thing else: or he would not, whatever he taught in *private*, have published in the vulgar tongue, a Book, that however well it may instruct the young practitioner, cannot fail to do hurt to the practitioners in general, and in time restore the practice to women again, to whom it by nature so properly and justly belongs: Which that we may all live to see, is the sincere Prayer of the Author.

The Plate annexed is an exact representation of a most surprising and wonderful MONSTER, born in the year 1745, which baffled the skill of one of the most *eminent* Male Practitioners of the present age, for upwards of ten hours! and well it might; for when it was brought into the world, by *another* Operator, it proved indeed to be a creature,
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something smaller than a full grown child ; but then it had hair upon its head, a round high forehead, two very large blue eyes, a small flattish nose, and an opening just under it, which had the appearance of a small pouting mouth ! and at the extremity of each leg and arm, grew five excrescences with nails thereon, that exactly resembled toes and fingers ! the excrescences on the legs, however, were much shorter than those *adhering* to the extremity of the arms. It was thought nevertheless, that this *Lusus Naturæ*, this wonderful and astonishing Monster, might have lived, had it not been for two large holes in the *Cranium*, that let the brains out ! But what is most remarkable is, that the Father of this prodigy in nature, is a very well proportioned man ! and the Mother, who died, (owing only to a few inward *snips* with the boring scissars, and a few *false* purchases of the *crotchet* and *forceps*, is said, by her neighbours, to have been as fine a woman as you would wish to see *walk the streets, in a sun-shiney summer's day !*

References to the P L A T E annexed.

- (a a) The excrescences growing out of the arms and legs.
- (b) The Operator's hand, with one end of the hook in it, and the other end in the child's *Cranium*.
- (c) The boring scissars, with their rests, for reducing a child's head in the mother's womb ; vulgarly called, *scooping out the brains*.
- (e) The curved Forceps.
- (f) The common Forceps, almost as constantly used as cautiously concealed, according to Smellie's directions !
- N. B. There are many other instruments used, as almost every operator has some of his own particular construction ; but the above are those which are particularly recommended by Smellie, as least liable to cut the *Operator's fingers*, or the woman's *Vagina !*
- * * The common Forceps are about a foot in length, and the curved Forceps a good deal longer ; the boring Scissars are about nine inches long.

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.---Page 42, For *Spartan*, read *Athenian*.

